

Led by a Lion

The US Role in Preserving Gulf Security



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AS THE GULF War slowly fades into the history books, it is important to realize that the Middle East remains a region scarred by conflict and tension. While the United States struggles to control the myriad problems such as guaranteeing the flow of Persian Gulf oil, deterring Iraq and Iran, and moving the Arab-Israeli peace process forward, many people wonder if the United States can "go it alone" in this critical area of the world. Not only has the Middle East threatened to overload the resources of the military, but also a growing

Editorial Abstract: This article is a wake-up reminder that the Gulf War denouement is still unfolding. Although Balkan problems and Asian tension may have temporarily eclipsed media attention on the Gulf, the hot spot fanned by Iraq and its dictator is much more than a glowing ember. We must realize that we cannot extinguish this long-term problem by sprinting but have to commit ourselves to marathon-like endurance. The Gulf scenario involves a complex interaction of economic, political, and military forces thrown into further turmoil by a long history of ethnic and religious differences. It is very much to our advantage that a miscalculation somewhere does not cause an eruption on a grand scale. Here, Major Talbot and Lieutenant Hicks explore the strategic issues and policy options.



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anti-American sentiment has subjected American troops to increasing terrorist threats in the last decade. In response to these recent trends, many individuals within the political and military arenas have pushed for a regional security arrangement that places a greater responsibility for the region's defense on the Arab countries themselves. Using the Gulf War as a catalyst, the United States has committed itself to uniting the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) into a defensive security regime.¹ Although drawbacks exist, such as a potential loss of US control within the region, official security-strategy documents have identified this regional cooperation as a national objective.²

Moreover, pressures are mounting—even within the military—to bring US forces home, as evidenced by the *Air Force Times* headline “Ryan to JCS: Give Us a Break!”³ Currently, we have seven thousand airmen in the Middle East, and since the end of the Gulf War, between 10,000 and 28,000 US military forces have maintained constant vigilance in the Persian Gulf and surrounding region.⁴ Operations in other regions of the world have come and gone, but the Gulf deployments continue on a significant scale, driving operations tempos to all-time highs for the military services. Why the continued large-scale presence when the threat has diminished? Most analysts agree that Iraq's forces, which failed so miserably against coalition forces, are less than half as capable as they were during 1991,⁵ and Iran is making friendly overtures across the Gulf to its Arab neighbors and the United States. Moreover, given the efforts already put forth to strengthen the GCC (e.g., the military buildups of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, the pending purchase of 80 F-16s by the United Arab Emirates [UAE], and the general overall improvement in the quantity and quality of weapons within the militaries of the GCC's member states), it would seem that the Joint Chiefs of Staff could answer the call of Gen Michael Ryan, Air Force chief of staff, by reducing US forces in the Middle East. This article, therefore, explores the options available to US policy makers on

whether such a force reduction should take place and whether the GCC can increase its security role in the Gulf.

The article assesses US-GCC cooperation efforts to maintain the flow of oil in the Gulf, discusses obstacles to these efforts, examines the US effort to contain Iraq and Iran, addresses the ongoing Arab-Israeli peace process, and concludes with a discussion of national security strategy for the Gulf that best guides US policy for the region. It argues that at this time we cannot rely upon the GCC to increase its role in providing regional security. US forces, therefore, remain crucial to maintaining Gulf security and must be kept at current levels—at least until Saddam Hussein falls from power in Iraq. Thus, the reduced threat will allow for a decreased US presence, and, in the long term, the GCC will increase its ability to provide for its own security.

Gulf Security and US-GCC Cooperation

Whenever Gulf oil flow has been threatened, the United States has watched with utmost concern. The oil crises of 1973, 1979, and 1991 were all associated with conflict. During the Yom Kippur War of 1973, the oil states in the Gulf suspended shipments to the United States because of its exports of military hardware to Israel. The Iranian revolution of 1979 sent oil prices soaring. The subsequent Iran-Iraq War led to the so-called tanker war, which threatened Gulf shipping and in which Americans and Russians cooperated to “flag” Kuwaiti tankers in order to protect them from Iranian attack. During 1991, oil prices temporarily soared again because of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Since then, US forces have been constantly present to maintain both oil flow and stability in the Gulf.

The United States has worked to improve security in two ways: (1) maintain some form of US presence and (2) bolster security assistance through weapons sales and training in the use of military hardware. Prior to the Gulf War, only Oman and Bahrain permitted any

type of US presence on their soil. Now, we have signed defense cooperation agreements (DCA) with Kuwait, the UAE, and Qatar. Saudi Arabia signed a less binding status-of-forces agreement.⁶ Most of the GCC states have increased their defense postures by significantly increasing defense spending since the end of the Gulf War; in fact, four of the six are among the world's top seven countries in terms of the percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) spent on defense (table 1). Moreover, all member states have allowed some form of US presence since 1991, as detailed below.

Table 1

States Spending Greatest Share of GDP on Defense, 1999	
State	GDP Percentage Spent on Defense
Eritrea	35.8
Saudi Arabia	15.7
Afghanistan	14.5
North Korea	14.3
Oman	13.6
Kuwait	12.9
Qatar	12.0

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies, as reported in *Gulfwire*, 25 October 1999 (an online E-mail subscription weekly news service provided by the National Council on US-Arab Relations, Washington, D.C.).

Kuwait

The United States has contributed to Kuwaiti defense with sales of 40 F-18 fighters, 50 M-1 tanks, and a number of Patriot air defense missiles. The sale of Apache Long Bow helicopters has also received approval.⁷ More importantly, we have pre-positioned equipment to outfit a mechanized brigade in Kuwait—including manning for a permanent brigade headquarters—and we have stationed battalion-sized units of troops there on a rotating basis. Air Force fighter units of F-16s and A-10s (sometimes F-15s) also deploy on a rotational basis. Facilities used by these soldiers and airmen undergo upgrades to improve the quality of life and to allow more aircraft to de-

ploy into the region quickly.⁸ Combined training and exercises take place regularly; forces share facilities to enhance cooperation; and Kuwait picks up the tab for most in-country costs of the US presence, such as maintenance, fuel, and food. Kuwait has further enhanced its border security by digging a wide, deep ditch to stop tanks and by erecting an electric fence along the entire 215-kilometer border with Iraq, which is monitored by 19 Kuwaiti guard posts.⁹ Furthermore, crises have tested the US-Kuwaiti relationship, especially during the Vigilant Warrior deployment of October 1994 in response to an Iraqi buildup of nearly one hundred thousand troops on the border. Such crises have helped to smooth out differences, and Kuwait currently views the relationship quite favorably, as evidenced by its recent decision to allow permanent stationing of the brigade headquarters.¹⁰

Still, the Kuwaitis have concerns. They have closely monitored cuts in the US defense budget and personnel since the end of the Gulf War, which has resulted in the opstempo problem noted earlier. This situation became most conspicuous to Gulf residents when US forces in the Gulf redeployed to Somalia during January 1993 to participate in the Restore Hope mission, sanctioned by the United Nations (UN) and launched the month prior. Such concerns have led them to seek backup sources of protection. Kuwait has signed DCAs with Great Britain, France, and Russia¹¹ and currently purchases arms from all five permanent members of the Security Council in order to ensure their support should another crisis arise.¹² In sum, the Kuwaitis' cry is "Yankee, don't go home!" Their biggest fear remains Iraq.

Saudi Arabia

Officially, the Saudis are very supportive of a US force presence since security is their number-one concern. They have continued to support Operation Southern Watch, the no-fly/no-drive zone established over southern Iraq south of the 33d parallel, which allows US aircraft to overfly Iraq to enforce the



Containment of Iraq remains a vital interest of the United States in the Persian Gulf region.

UN-established zone.¹³ The Saudis host the bulk of the coalition forces that enforce Southern Watch: Prince Sultan Air Base is home to approximately 60 US Air Force fighters as well as French and British warplanes, all on temporary rotational deployments, usually lasting 90 days. Still, with the exception of 1994's Operation Desert Fox, they have not allowed the launch of preplanned combat ground-attack sorties against Iraq from their soil.

To improve GCC's and its own military capabilities, Saudi Arabia houses the 10,000-man Peninsula Shield combined force based in the King Khalid Military District in the northeast sector of the country.¹⁴ The Saudis have also recently purchased 75 F-15S fighters equipped with the latest advanced medium-range air-to-air missiles (AMRAAM),¹⁵ as well

as 60 Tornado fighters from Europe. A major purchase of US F-16s may occur in the future as the Saudis replace their fleet of F-5s.¹⁶ Early buyers of the airborne warning and control system aircraft, they now lead GCC efforts toward building an integrated ground-based radar system for air defense, currently under construction. They are also driving GCC's purchase of a secure telecommunications system and have plans for a combined command, control, communications, and intelligence center.¹⁷

The Southern Gulf

Iran, not Iraq, poses the greatest threat to the Southern Gulf states. A dispute over ownership of the Tunbs and Abu Musa islands remains the primary source of contention between

the UAE and Iran. As recently as October 1999, the UAE ambassador to the UN called Iran's military presence on the islands "a threat to the UAE."¹⁸ To build its defenses, the UAE plans to buy the latest Block-60 version of the F-16 aircraft, including the latest AMRAAMs and high-speed antiradiation missiles.¹⁹ However, like Saudi Arabia, the UAE has chosen not to rely on US fighter technology alone and is buying an additional 33 Mirage 2000-9s from France. It is also upgrading the 30 Mirages already in its inventory to match the capabilities of the 2000-9s.²⁰ Russia has also benefited from the UAE's arming efforts with sales of portable surface-to-air missiles (SAM), including the SA-7, -14, and -16; an SA-12 unit; and the lease of four IL-76 transport aircraft.²¹

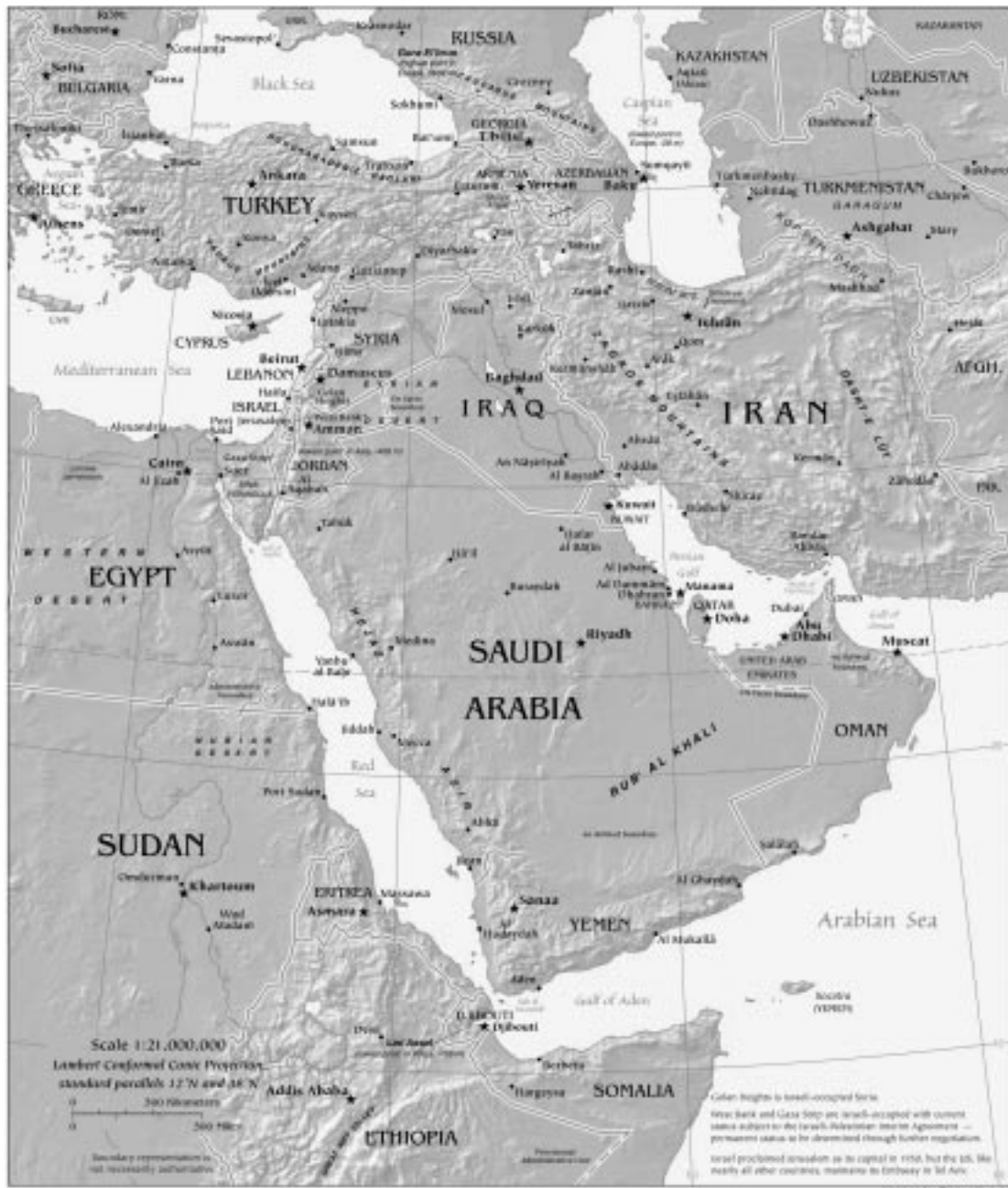
Qatar has agreed to host pre-positioned equipment for an Army brigade now 80 percent in-place,²² and in 1996 it hosted an air expeditionary force consisting of 30 fighters and four tankers. Air Force pre-positioning is also likely,²³ given the ongoing construction of what may be the premier air base in the Gulf at Al-Udeid. One analyst suggested that the Qatari philosophy behind construction was "build it and they will come."²⁴ In other words, one obtains the best defense by providing the best facilities for US and coalition forces. As for weapons buys, the fact that the Qataris purchase 70 percent of their military hardware from France creates difficulties in terms of integrating systems in the GCC's defense structure. Purchases have included 12 Mirage 2000-5 fighters.²⁵ Moreover, Bahrain has signed a deal for 10-12 F-16 fighters, which, like the UAE's, will have AMRAAMs.²⁶ Bahrain allows the US Air Force to pre-position equipment to support eleven hundred personnel as well as flight-line maintenance and medical-evacuation supplies.²⁷ Officially, both Bahrain and Qatar remain very supportive of the US presence in the Gulf.

Less able to afford military technology than its neighbors, Oman still ardently supports the GCC's Peninsula Shield combined military force and provides soldiers to militaries of other Gulf states, including Kuwait,

the UAE, and Qatar, who face manpower shortages.²⁸ Oman, perhaps the strongest supporter of the US presence in the Gulf, signed its access agreement with the United States in 1981, an unpopular time to do so. It hosts three Air Force pre-positioning sites with support equipment for 26,000 personnel as well as required equipment and fuel to maintain three air bases.²⁹ Moreover, Oman's neutral stance during the Iran-Iraq War has allowed it to keep positive relations with Iran, and it is the only Gulf State invited to observe Iranian military exercises. The fact that Oman also functions as mediator in the island dispute between the UAE and Iran³⁰ could make it a useful intermediary for US-Iranian and GCC-Iranian relations.

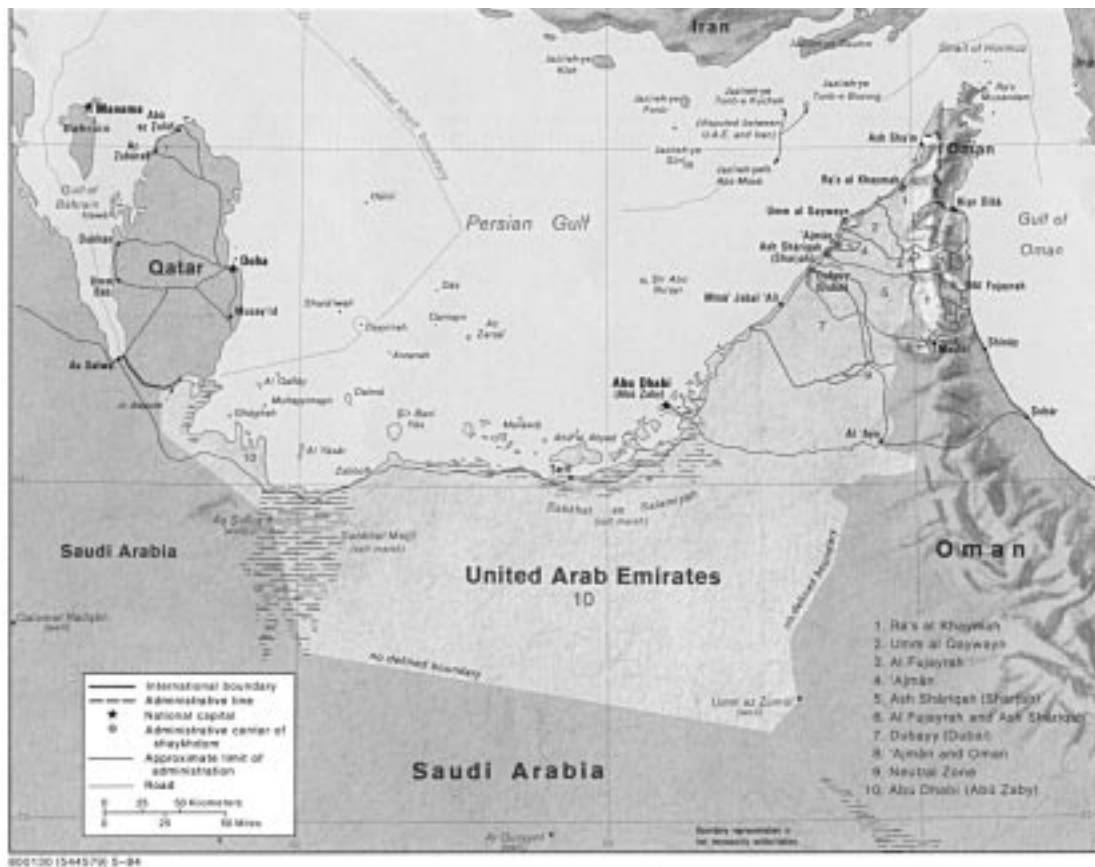
As noted above, the Gulf states tend to buy a variety of weapons from a variety of sources, symbolizing more of an effort to buy alliances than build a technologically competent force. Anthony Cordesman refers to this phenomenon as *technological turbulence*.³¹ Without a focus on manpower training, interoperability, and force sustainability, the Gulf efforts to acquire high-technology weapons may do more harm than good for the building of a Gulf coalition. Such massive arms buildups without a focus on the mission leaves sustainability in question. This remains a problem, despite recent announcements that the GCC is "striving for an unprecedented level of integration between their militaries"³² and despite the Saudis' efforts, described earlier, to integrate air defense, communications, and command and control.

Still, Secretary of Defense William Cohen has encouraged GCC's efforts by recently proposing a "cooperative defense initiative," which envisions sharing early warning information, promoting theater missile defense, and improving deterrence through consequence management. The latter entails the sharing of passive systems such as protective clothing and vaccines against biological and chemical threats and training the GCC states in dealing with humanitarian catastrophes resulting from nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) attacks.³³ Such efforts move the



GCC toward greater military cooperation and improve the likelihood of self-reliance in the future, but US policy makers must be careful before deciding to move US forces over the horizon. Indeed, Secretary Cohen's recent

proposal is likely to increase rather than lessen the involvement of the United States in the region. Most experts agree that we cannot make the GCC force into something it is not and that Saudi efforts such as the integrated



radar system are in their infant stages, requiring a more robust plan for deployment. In other words, there is no “budding North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)” in the near future of the GCC, despite some reports to the contrary.³⁴

Obviously, then, the Gulf states are buying the forces to bolster security and have significantly improved their inventories since the end of the Gulf War, especially Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the UAE (table 2). The other countries’ efforts are more modest, but one should emphasize their gains in order to keep policy makers working toward continued US involvement in the region, especially in light of technological turbulence and additional obstacles to GCC cooperation, mentioned below. Dr. John Duke Anthony of the National Council on US-Arab Relations stresses

four positives. First, the GCC, a coalition-in-being since 1984, has assembled a 10,000-man Peninsula Shield force and is improving defense cooperation with shared air defense and communications networks. Second, the Gulf states have provided more basing support (fuel, logistics, etc.) to the United States than other allies in other regions of the world where America has deployed troops. Third, GCC states pay cash for weapons purchases and paid for much of the US operations costs during the Gulf War. Other areas of the world have more typically relied upon outside financial assistance. Fourth, no Gulf state currently demands the removal of US troops from its soil. Moreover, Dr. Anthony recommends that we should be careful to avoid giving the Gulf Arabs the impression that we are not committed to staying in the region as

long as necessary to provide security.³⁵ Indeed, much of their concern stems from past inconsistencies and recent reports that the United States will reduce forces. Secretary Cohen visited the Gulf in October 1999 to assure GCC members that "we will keep the same level of forces in the region for the indefinite future."³⁶

Table 2

Comparison of Forces: Iran, Iraq, and GCC

	<i>Iran</i>	<i>Iraq</i>	<i>GCC</i>
Active Military Forces	545,600	429,000	308,600
Active Main Battle Tanks	1,390	1,900	1,447
Total Combat Aircraft	307	353	689

Source: Anthony Cordesman, "The Military Balance in the Middle East—Gulf Overview: Part VIII," CSIS, 29 December 1998, 5, 11, 34.

Obstacles to US-GCC Cooperation

I and my brothers against my cousin; I and my cousins against the stranger.

—Arab proverb

Despite bilateral cooperation, agreements with the United States, and GCC's multilateral cooperative efforts, mentioned above, the Gulf Arabs remain fragmented for a variety of reasons that we must address in order to evaluate security prospects for the Gulf. Moreover, military cooperation efforts with other Arab countries beyond the Gulf have failed to materialize.

Outside observers would likely view an organization such as the GCC as a Pan-Arab movement, but Arab nationalism has actually died a quiet death within the Gulf, and national sovereignty has become the focus of the Middle Eastern states.³⁷ There were at least three contending perceptions with regard to joining the GCC, according to UAE professor Abdul Khaleq Abdulla, and only

one envisioned a military alliance. To illustrate, Kuwait saw the GCC as a potential Arab common market with economic benefits, whereas Saudi Arabia had plans of preserving the political status quo on the Arabian Peninsula and ensuring itself of the dominant role. Oman was keen to create a Gulf version of NATO and stressed the need to coordinate strategy with the United States. The smaller states simply felt that the GCC represented "added insurance" and that they would gain from the benefits of economic and military cooperation. With these differences in mind, the GCC role remains unclear, and it has even "done everything conceivable, in both word and deed, to avoid being perceived as a military alliance against any nation."³⁸

Moreover, the tribal or family aspect of the Gulf monarchies results in many ongoing rivalries that drive a wedge between closer GCC relations, and individual state policies often work at cross-purposes with one another. Oman, for example, believes that the Saudis readily oppose most of the ideas and initiatives of the other states in an effort to dominate the GCC. The Saudis' de facto "veto" of Sultan Qaboos's recommendation in 1991 to increase the size of the Peninsula Shield's combined force from 10,000 to one hundred thousand troops derived from a political rivalry with Oman.³⁹ A high-ranking Omani official also feels that less trust exists among GCC members since the Gulf War, claiming that many people in his country think the Saudi royal family is too powerful and that the power division between Crown Prince Abdullah (who commands the regular army) and Prince Sultan (who commands the National Guard) will lead to a power rivalry after King Fahd's passing—one that would impair stability within the GCC.⁴⁰

Furthermore, Qatar has angered the Saudis and the Kuwaitis by reestablishing diplomatic relations with Iraq. Qatar also initiated a natural-gas deal with the Israelis and signed a series of agreements with Iran against GCC's wishes at the time. In turn, the surrounding states continued to support the deposed emir of Qatar, Sheik Khalifa, by offering a "head of

state" welcome,⁴¹ leading to Qatar's pullout from spring 1996 exercises conducted by the Peninsula Shield force.⁴² Moreover, border disputes exist between Qatar-Bahrain and Qatar-Saudi Arabia, which led to a bloody encounter between the latter two in 1992.

Bahrain faces internal disputes due to its Shia majority in the Sunni-controlled state. The Shia may not serve in the military or police force, requiring Bahrain to rely on recruits from other GCC states to fill its ranks. In the past, Iranian groups have also been found in Bahrain making contact with the Bahraini Shia and stirring up trouble against the government.⁴³ More recently, however, the Iranians are having less success with the Arab-Shia of Bahrain as they face their own legitimacy crisis at home.⁴⁴

The regional cooperation that does exist stems from the belief that the Gulf states are sovereign and should not be subject to attack or threats from beyond the peninsula. Such threats come not only from Iraq and Iran but also from the United States (or such is the perception), albeit not in the traditional sense. Many Arabs believe that Western culture represents an attack on their own religion and culture, perceiving it as a threat as dangerous as any military invasion they may face. Some Gulf states, in particular Saudi Arabia, believe that a stronger regional security arrangement will result in a smaller US presence within the region, helping to establish their own sovereignty while eliminating the influence of American culture. Although such governments as Saudi Arabia's appreciate the security and business that the American presence brings to the region, they must balance their own wishes with those of the people in the long term. Many Saudi Arabian citizens despise the American presence, an occupation of sorts in their eyes. These citizens, if they cannot find recourse within their own government, often turn to fundamentalist movements that readily take up the cause of purging the region of Western influence, as evidenced by the Khobar towers bombing of 1996 in Saudi Arabia. The governments of these Gulf states, although not necessarily

holding to the fundamentalists' views, recognize that they must appease such religious perceptions if they wish to maintain power.

Many Arabs believe that Western culture represents an attack on their own religion and culture, perceiving it as a threat as dangerous as any military invasion they may face.

They hope that an improved regional-security arrangement dominated by Arab nations will increase their own internal security while quieting the fundamentalists' calls for an end to American "imperialism."

The Gulf states thus find themselves in an interesting and, in some respects, embarrassing dilemma. As proud Muslims, many find it disgraceful that they have become so reliant upon Western powers. However, despite strong sentiments and rhetoric, many Arabs believe that the US presence is a necessary evil until they can stand by themselves within an independent security regime. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, no government has called for a reduction of US forces, and doubts remain as to whether the GCC can completely provide its own security anytime in the near future.

Immediately following the Gulf War, the GCC states realized that one of their greatest obstacles to security was a lack of military manpower, primarily due to small populations in most GCC states. The problem also stemmed from the unwillingness of the authoritarian regimes to place too much power in the hands of the military by conscripting a large force. In response, the GCC states signed an agreement with Egypt and Syria to provide needed manpower for a "Gulf security regime" (also known as the "Damascus Declaration" or "six plus two" agreement) in order to prevent a repeat of the Gulf War. The GCC states hoped that Egyptian and Syrian forces would be on hand to deter or stop future Iraqi attacks until US or other Western enforcements arrived to push back any poten-

tial invader. However, not long after the end of the Gulf War, the Saudis kindly asked the Egyptian and Syrian forces, left behind in Saudi Arabia, to depart, out of fear of Syrian-Egyptian intentions over the long term. Most analysts now believe that the Damascus Declaration is a dead issue, and one could say that the governments of the Gulf states simply trusted Washington more than their Egyptian and Syrian cousins.⁴⁵ Thus, US policy makers should not rely on those states as backup sources of manpower for the GCC.

In sum, domestic tensions have risen throughout the region, forcing the GCC states to be more protective of their national sovereignty than ever before.⁴⁶ Paul Noble provides several reasons for this situation. First, socioeconomic tensions have arisen because of high population growth rates, which, coupled with falling oil prices, have lowered GDPs among the Gulf states. Second, and a new source of tension, disgruntled populations protest the domineering behavior and insensitivity of the United States and Western powers whose military forces remain in the region. Third, and of greatest concern, the frustrations of continuing authoritarian rule and the turn to Islam or fundamentalism as a more legitimate source of rule have produced sociocultural and political tensions.⁴⁷ Many states have created parliaments in an attempt to become more moderate and in touch with such cultural tensions, but some analysts think these reforms take place too slowly. In the future, the decentralizing effects of the information revolution could undermine the Gulf's authoritarian regimes. The authoritarian governments will be less able to make "back room deals" and cover up their mistakes than in the past, and, in any case, these effects will force them to become more accountable to their populations.⁴⁸ With so many potential problems on the governments' agendas, at least one of the southern Gulf states may reach a breaking point—something that US analysts of the region need to watch out for. Moreover, the demise of the Damascus Declaration leaves the GCC

states unable to defend themselves and makes necessary a US military presence in the region.

Dual Containment Policy: Iraq and Iran

One must discuss US policy with regard to Iraq and Iran in order to fully develop a Gulf regional security policy. The term *dual containment*, coined by the Clinton administration for domestic political considerations, actually refers to two quite different policies. US policy toward Iraq goes far beyond containment and has included frequent military action, funding of opposition groups, and protection of Kurds and Shiites within Iraqi borders. In general, nothing short of the replacement of the current regime will result in a new US policy toward Iraq. In other words, the US seeks new leadership there but has made no commitment to actually overthrow the government. The policy toward Iran is much less obtrusive, simply limited to preventing it from dominating its neighbors, spreading terrorism and subversion, and limiting imports to control the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The focus is more on changing Iranian foreign policy, not its government.⁴⁹

Iraq

US efforts to contain Iraq have been successful in that Saddam has not attacked his neighbors, and his forces have been reduced by half since 1991. Its WMD program was slowed significantly by the United Nations Special Commission's inspections. Still, many people have criticized US policy because Saddam remains in power and because many of the administration's decisions have hurt the coalition built to defeat Iraq, especially during 1997–98, in which the intrusive inspection regime, so crucial to ensuring denial of WMD, ended.⁵⁰

Since Desert Fox (December 1998), military strikes have occurred regularly in Iraq. Michael Eisenstadt questions whether a policy of "occasional military strikes" is politically sustainable, given that the Gulf Arabs as well

as France and Russia have questioned the bombing and have withheld support in the past.⁵¹ Nevertheless, Pentagon officials approve of the altered rules of engagement that have evolved since Desert Fox and allow allied forces to preemptively strike any part of the Iraqi air defense system anytime provocation occurs. This "low-level war of attrition" continues as long as Iraq challenges the no-fly-zone operations and has resulted in the destruction of a quarter of the Iraqi air defense system.⁵² Furthermore, some analysts believe that the pressure of continued air strikes throughout 1999 has weakened Saddam's hold on power. Iraqi acts that may indicate an element of desperation include calling for the overthrow of governments in neighboring countries (Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait); storming out of a meeting of the Arab League after that body insisted on Iraq's compliance with UN resolutions; threatening attacks on Turkey, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia; and denying ammunition supplies to Iraq's regular army units to discourage rebellion. Moreover, in March 1999, reports indicated that Saddam had executed 24 army officers, including the general who commanded Baghdad's air defense system.⁵³

Overall, events since Desert Fox seem to have isolated Saddam and perhaps weakened his hold on power. In fact, while addressing an audience at the Virginia Military Institute in September 1999, Gen Anthony Zinni, commander of US Central Command (CENTCOM), made a bold prediction that Saddam would fall from power within the next year.⁵⁴ With that in mind, policy makers must address what might happen in a post-Saddam Gulf. The administration has not thought carefully through this contingency other than to plan to withdraw the majority of military forces based in the Gulf to over the horizon, once the Iraqi threat vanishes. We must also have a strategy to keep the state of Iraq from disintegrating should Saddam suddenly fall.⁵⁵

Iran

Policy analysts conduct an ongoing debate regarding Iran, some calling for continued

sanctions and criticizing the US policy of thawing relations.⁵⁶ Others see Iranian president Mohammad Khatami as a moderate, feeling that the United States should end sanctions and make every effort to establish an open dialogue—even diplomatic relations—with his regime.⁵⁷ Somewhere in between lies the most likely middle ground.

During 1995–96, US policy focused on isolating Iran. President Bill Clinton cancelled a Conoco-Iranian deal to develop two Gulf oil fields, and the congressional Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA) imposed sanctions on foreign firms investing more than \$40 million in Iran's oil and gas industry. Since 1997, US policy has moderated. ILSA sanctions were not applied to the French firm Total, which took the place of Conoco in developing an Iranian oil field, although the US government continues to oppose investment in the oil sector. Moreover, both President Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright have indicated a willingness to improve relations with Iran.⁵⁸

Indeed, Iran eradicated its poppy crop last year, allowing the United States to remove it from the list of major drug producers, and athletic and academic exchanges have begun between the United States and Iran. The Treasury Department also approved the sale of American grain.⁵⁹ But sanctions remain in place to ban dual-use technologies that could be used to produce WMD, and Iran remains on the list of state supporters of terrorism. The sanctions will likely remain in place until Iran stops supporting and encouraging terrorist groups that interfere with the Arab-Israeli peace process.⁶⁰

Iran's military, like Iraq's, has been hampered by many problems. Modernization efforts have not kept up with the effects of time and wear and tear on the equipment. For example, during 1989–91, Iran received 24 MiG-29 fighters and 12 Su-24 deep-strike aircraft, as well as SA-5 and SA-6 SAMs.⁶¹ But agreements for further deliveries after the end of the cold war were curtailed due to lack of money. Patrick Clawson reports that from 1989 to 1996, Iran sought one hundred to two

hundred fighter aircraft but received only 57. Foreign-exchange purchases for weapons fell from \$2.5 billion in 1991 to less than \$1 billion in 1997.⁶² Moreover, Iran signed the Chemical Weapons Convention in January 1998, which obligates it to declare its chemical weapons inventories and destroy them within 10 years.⁶³ Still, Iran's intentions, when it comes to the Chemical Weapons Convention as well as the Nonproliferation Treaty, remain unknown due to the power struggle between moderates and conservatives within the government. For example, Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps commander, Yaha Rahim Safavi, who is in charge of Iran's NBC weapons programs, announced his opposition to arms control commitments during a closed meeting with his officers.⁶⁴ Moreover, the Central Intelligence Agency recently announced that Iran may already have a nuclear capability.⁶⁵ Iran has also recently tested the intermediate-range missile Shahab-3, which has the capability of reaching across the Gulf to all countries of the GCC and Israel.⁶⁶

Lack of money has also affected the Iranian population. Clawson reports that living standards are at half the prerevolution level. Over eight hundred thousand young men join the labor force each year although government policies create only 350,000 new jobs.⁶⁷ Growing domestic demands will also curtail oil sales—official forecasts put Iranian consumption equal with production in 15–25 years.⁶⁸ This will further cripple the economy unless Iran can develop means of diversification that provide other exports to replace oil. These conditions help to explain the university protests that occurred throughout Iran during the summer of 1999. Students acted to defend Khatami's economic reform and modernization efforts, which have clashed with the thinking of conservative clerics led by Supreme Guide Ayatollah Ali Khamanei, who remains the ultimate ruler of Iran.

Many people argue that the United States is not doing everything it could to prevent Iraq and Iran from rebuilding their military arsenals, including ballistic missile technology. Still, even officials responsible for over-

seeing the numerous arms control regimes recognize that they are often just an irritant to those states and individuals committed to exporting and importing weapon technology. As Michael Barnett points out, the Middle East has been proficient in circumventing arms control regimes and inspection agencies, some of the ways in which confidence can be restored to a region.⁶⁹ Although some scholars claim that the spread of missile technology raises the costs of war and thus provides a deterrent capacity, the extent to which this technology enables and encourages a potential first strike destabilizes the entire region. Indeed, many people wonder if Iran and Iraq will play by the rules that guide the decisions of other states in a region where insecurity guides the actions of most, if not all, of the players. Specifically, they question if one can apply the rational-actor assumption to these and other proliferating nations. Other people argue that the acquisition of such weapons may make actors rational, but the general consensus is that Iran and Iraq (especially under Saddam) are less predictable than other states with which the United States deals.⁷⁰

In sum, dual containment remains the correct short-term policy in the northern Gulf region. Until Saddam is removed from power, we must maintain pressure on the Iraqi regime. In Iran, the struggle for leadership leaves that state in uncertain hands until a victor emerges. Until then, we must demonstrate our lack of approval of WMD proliferation efforts while at the same time letting Khatami know that we would like to work toward amiable relations in the future. We should also support improved Iranian ties with the GCC. Moreover, as discussed below, US-Iranian relations could improve by moving Israel and Syria toward a comprehensive peace agreement.

Israel, the Peace Process, and the Gulf

The history of the Middle East has shown anti-Israeli sentiment as one of the strongest

unifying causes for the Arab and Muslim states. The lack of progress in the Arab-Israeli peace process thus contributes to frustrations throughout the Middle East, provides an additional reason to criticize US efforts in the region, and encourages the Israeli lobby to block US military assistance to the Gulf Arabs.⁷¹ The Arab states believe that, as a superpower, the United States can force a peace settlement and could do so if its policies did not always favor Israel.⁷² Syria, Israel's primary adversary, boasts armed forces totaling more than four hundred thousand men, with a like number in reserve, as well as an arsenal including more than forty-six hundred modern tanks and some six hundred combat aircraft—greater than those of any other regional state or the combined assets of Britain, France, and Italy.⁷³ Syria also has close ties to Iran, another Israeli adversary. Iranian support to the Hizbollah in Lebanon, which routinely carries out attacks against the Israeli military, would be severely curtailed by a Syrian-Israeli peace treaty. In turn, Iran's justification for opposing Israel would lose credibility.

Thus, making peace with Syria is important because it would reduce tensions in the region and likely lead to peace with Lebanon and Palestine, the only other hurdles remaining to a multilateral settlement involving all of the surrounding Arab states. Such a peace is so crucial to US security concerns that Brent Scowcroft, former national security advisor to President George Bush, suggests it may be in our national interest to put US troops on the Golan Heights to ensure a negotiated peace settlement between Israel and Syria.⁷⁴ Israeli-Syrian peace would also placate Egyptian reservations about being the only major Middle Eastern military power to have signed a peace deal with Israel. Moreover, of direct concern to the GCC region, Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak believes that a peace settlement will "open an avenue [of Arab-Israeli cooperation] to the entire Arabian Peninsula."⁷⁵ Indeed, a security arrangement that actually improves the stability of the entire region, not to mention the individual GCC states, would be an important step in



Persian Gulf commitments require a US presence.

bringing comprehensive peace to the Middle East. Thus, US policy must address the issue of Israel and the peace process in order to improve the prospects for security in the GCC region.

Preserving Gulf and Regional Security: US Policy Recommendations

*It is better to be part of a herd led by a lion
than to be the leader of a flock of sheep.*

—Arab proverb

Of the many options for US grand strategy after the cold war, Robert J. Art points to *selective engagement* as an emerging favorite among military analysts. By definition, selective engagement means "steer[ing] the middle course between an isolationist, unilateralist course, on the one hand, and a world policeman, highly interventionist role, on the other. . . . It strikes a balance between doing too much and too little" to support our allies.⁷⁶ Selective engagement envisions leadership over effective alliances "because standing alliances permit more rapid and more effective action than assembling ad hoc coalitions," and alliances can provide institutional forums to manage political-military relations.⁷⁷ NATO has proven to be such an institution in Europe, where it effectively stood the cold war test of time and more recently was able to bring an end to conflict in Bosnia after the UN had failed to do so.

The question thus arises, Can the states of the GCC and the United States build such an alliance? Even though we have pointed out

A cooperative order might emerge in the Gulf around a bargain: the states cooperate to enhance Gulf security, and, in turn, the United States provides a security guarantee. At the same time—and this is a key part of the agreement—the United States limits its exercise of power in the region.

many reasons why the GCC does not make up such an alliance at present, in the longer term, it has the potential of doing so. When one considers why these weak, secondary states have agreed to become more rather than less entangled with the United States since the Gulf War, one sees that the answer lies in the powerful incentives to create a legitimate political order. A cooperative order might emerge in the Gulf around a bargain: the states cooperate to enhance Gulf security, and, in turn, the United States provides a security guarantee. At the same time—and this is a key part of the agreement—the United States *limits its exercise of power in the region*. Many concerns and criticisms coming from the Gulf states' populations are based upon the fear of the United States overstaying its welcome, while the governments are generally concerned we might abandon them. Being *led by a lion* (the United States) is better than *following the sheep* (reliance upon the GCC) in the eyes of the Gulf Arabs. Strategic restraint on the part of the United States, coupled with security guarantees and efforts to promote intertheater cooperation, addresses Arab concerns and allows the GCC to evolve toward a regional security organization.⁷⁸

Moreover, in the Middle East, Gulf leaders trust the United States more than they trust other Arab states such as Egypt and Syria—or even each other, for that matter. This is particularly true of the small GCC states with

regard to Saudi Arabia; thus, engagement in this region of the world is crucial to keeping them united against a potential aggressor.⁷⁹ It also follows that a selective-engagement strategy fulfills the leading US national interests in the Middle East: securing the flow of Persian Gulf oil by sustaining the GCC states, curbing potential Iraqi and Iranian ambitions in the region, and enhancing the Arab-Israeli peace process.

GCC

In order to enact a selective-engagement policy in the GCC region, the United States must continue to build on its bilateral ties with each of the Gulf states and work toward helping them reach a more formalized multilateral security arrangement. But it must do so slowly and deliberately, allowing the Gulf states to develop their own security structure rather than forcing a Western mold upon them. America cannot prescribe this process. Gulf leaders realize the need for cooperation, and, in their own way, they see themselves as brothers—one Arab nation facing common threats and sharing common interests. The Gulf states will come up with their own security initiatives over time, and we can provide the leadership, guidance, and prodding they need, especially in the not-too-distant future, when most of the current leaders will be replaced by a younger and more technically savvy generation with a greater vision and understanding of this need.⁸⁰ Most importantly, we must ensure them of our commitment to help them. One can almost guarantee that the future of the Middle East will be fraught with crises, and the Gulf states need to know that the United States will support them militarily. A reaffirmation of the Carter Doctrine by the current president and his replacement after this year's elections would be appropriate.⁸¹

Furthermore, supplying the Gulf with US weapons technology and security assistance improves security and creates a dependent relationship, which in turn creates a continuing need for US presence and assistance. Even though Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini had US technology after taking over Iran, the

withdrawal of US assistance rendered the technology either useless or greatly reduced in terms of efficiency. The same would apply to technology left to a fundamentalist regime on the Arabian Peninsula should one ever come to power. Interoperability could also be improved if the United States could convince the GCC states to buy mostly American or at least to procure compatible weapons systems across the coalition. One can achieve this only by building trust, maintaining a consistent policy, and reassuring them that American might will help them when the chips are down. They buy European—even Russian and Chinese—weapons in an effort to buy allies and assurances rather than to improve their military force structure. If US policy assured them that US support was unwavering, they would feel more secure and would more likely work toward interoperability and commonality of forces to improve the GCC alliance.

Moreover, American interaction with Gulf regimes could encourage (and perhaps has encouraged) the evolution of more democratic-like institutions in order to give the populations a greater voice in government and to help alleviate sociopolitical pressures that bolster Islamic fundamentalist movements. Such encouragement needs to come about through careful, diplomatic, constructive criticism and should not in any way arouse human-rights condemnations of the monarchical regimes. Gulf governments understand the necessity of controlling the forces calling for reform and are working to placate them in ways acceptable to their culture. Encouragement from US policy makers is intended only to get the process past sticking points and may even win support among those who desire reform.

Iraq and Iran

Any regional security vision must address Iraq and Iran. US policy toward Iraq should maintain the UN-imposed no-fly zones and sanctions as long as Saddam remains in power. Departure from this policy would only embolden Saddam to rebuild his military infrastructure and threaten the Gulf again, cost



Airpower demonstrations are part of US operations in the Persian Gulf.

the United States a great deal of credibility among its Gulf allies, and endanger the flow of oil. US forces in the Gulf should remain at present levels unless/until Saddam leaves the scene. Still, overtures should continue to the opposition groups, and the United States should increase efforts at letting the Iraqi people know that its conflict is with Saddam and not them. Iraq will be brought back into the fold of nations as soon as Saddam is removed from power. We should prepare plans to assist Iraq in its rebuilding efforts in case Saddam does make a sudden departure.

As for Iran, the United States should encourage the Saudi-led overtures toward cooperation across the Gulf, and, over time, it should also pursue a normalization of relations. We cannot rush this, due to the ongoing power struggle between Khatami and the more conservative clerics. Getting too friendly with the West too soon might weaken Khatami's hand and result in his downfall, because the pro-clerical forces are still very anti-Western.⁸² More than likely, the majority of the Iranian people will support Khatami's reforms, and we should support his efforts through back-channel negotiations until he emerges with greater control of the government. Should he do so, the United States could pursue a normalization of relations, including participation in security arrangements in the Gulf.

Arab-Israeli Peace Process

US involvement in the Arab-Israeli peace process can also follow the doctrine of selective

engagement. The United States should continue to encourage progress in the talks and be prepared to provide security guarantees and aid to the states that have yet to reach settlements with Israel (namely, Syria, Lebanon, and the Palestinian Authority). At the same time, the special relationship between the United States and Israel should continue, particularly the military cooperation that supplies high-technology weapons. But the United States must do more to treat the Arabs fairly and apply pressure when necessary to move negotiations forward. This is much easier said than done, given the domestic political considerations within the United States; still, such efforts could go a long way toward achieving real peace with the Levant Arabs and signal the Gulf Arabs that the United States can be a fair and equitable broker. This, in turn, would improve the prospects of achieving a lasting security arrangement in the Gulf.

Conclusion

Policy makers often work within a vacuum of sorts, for all too often they become so engrossed in their own small piece of the puzzle that they lose sight of the big picture. The overarching goals of the United States within the Gulf and greater Middle East are simple to spell out: (1) protect the flow of oil and provide security to the Gulf, (2) contain Iraq and Iran,

and (3) advance the peace process. In short, the United States seeks to preserve peace and stability and bring prosperity to the Middle East. Although the goals may be simple to define, the solutions are exponentially more complex. The Middle East, like the entire world, is a complicated, interdependent region. An action in one state aimed at addressing a problem will inevitably raise several new problems in several new states. That may appear to be an intuitive part of international relations, but it is a fact that is all too often dismissed when policy is enacted. The United States cannot afford to make such a mistake in this situation. The Middle East is a volatile region, where centuries of conflict, mixed with NBC weapons, promise a difficult and insecure future. Richard Haas's words serve as most appropriate guides to future policy: A "sturdy vision and consistent follow-up" is essential, and one must remember that "international institutions and norms take years to effect."⁸³ This is especially true in the Middle East, which is so culturally different from the West and where the term *institution* takes on an altered meaning. Such is the case with the GCC institution. It will take patience and the will to resist ad hoc, reactionary policies sometimes driven by domestic policy to keep US leadership and assistance to the region on track. There is no simple solution, and there is little room for error. The United States may get only one chance—it should be one that will work. □

Notes

1. The GCC is made up of the six Gulf states of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Oman.

2. For an excellent overview of US strategic interests in the Middle East, as well as a discussion of US plans for increasing the stability in the region, see Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, *United States Security Strategy for the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, Office of International Security Affairs, May 1995); and Robert J. Lieber, "Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy: Making Sense of America's Role in the Middle East Peace Process," *World Affairs* 161 (Summer 1998): 3–9.

3. The headline refers to Gen Michael Ryan, the Air Force's chief of staff, and his comments to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the need to slow the operations tempo driven by the large number of overseas deployments, including those in Turkey (Northern Watch) and Saudi Arabia/Kuwait (Southern Watch), which in-

volve nearly seven thousand airmen. See William Matthews and Bruce Rolfsen, "Ryan to JCS: Give Us a Break!" *Air Force Times*, 12 July 1999, 8.

4. Statistics from Jay E. Hines, US Central Command (CENTCOM) historian, reprinted in John Duke Anthony and Jean R. AbiNader, eds., "7th Annual U.S. Mideast Policymakers Conference Highlights" (Washington, D.C.: National Council on US-Arab Relations, 13–14 September 1998), 41.

5. As reported by the CENTCOM commander, Iraq has half the number of divisions and half the number of aircraft that it possessed at the beginning of the Gulf War. See Gen Anthony C. Zinni, keynote address, in Anthony and AbiNader, 39.

6. DCAs and status-of-forces agreements are authorized by the president as commander in chief and regulate the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of US military personnel in foreign countries. The more comprehensive DCAs also regulate access or basing

rights, pre-positioning of military equipment, and cost sharing. The Saudi and US governments disagree on whether the DCA between them remains in effect since the end of Operation Desert Storm, based on their belief that the end of the Gulf War terminated the agreement. Moreover, the UAE no longer recognizes its DCA. We still treat both as if they were in force. The UAE disputes jurisdiction over US troops and wants court jurisdiction in criminal cases. Qatar and Bahrain have also expressed desires to renegotiate their DCAs. All are 10-year agreements, and most will expire in 2001. At present, only Kuwait and Oman are content with the negotiated DCAs. Lt Col Steve Farrow, CENTCOM J-5, interviewed by Maj Brent J. Talbot, 1 September 1999.

7. Paladin artillery units as well as tube launched, optically tracked, wire guided (TOW) and Sidewinder missiles are also being sold to Kuwait. Commander John Sarao, CENTCOM J-4/7, interviewed by Maj Brent J. Talbot, 1 September 1999.

8. Kuwait and the United States will share the \$193 million construction costs to upgrade Al-Jaber Air Base and Camp Doha. The air base will be expanded to accommodate large transport aircraft. Camp Doha will become permanent headquarters for Operation Desert Spring, a brigade-command unit, and battalions will continue to deploy on a rotational basis to conduct exercises with the Kuwaitis and provide deterrence against Iraq. See Jim Garamone, "Kuwait OKs Long-Term U.S. Presence, Base Upgrades," *DefenseLink*, 25 October 1999; on-line, Internet, 21 November 1999, available from www.defenselink.mil/news/Oct1999/n10251999_9910253.html.

9. Shafeeq Ghabra, "Kuwait and the United States: The Reluctant Ally and U.S. Policy toward the Gulf," in David W. Lesch, ed., *The Middle East and the United States: A Historical and Political Reassessment*, 2d ed. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1999), 304-5.

10. Shafeeq Ghabra, director of the Kuwait Information Office, also emphasized the excellent US-Kuwaiti relationship. Interviewed by Maj Brent J. Talbot, Washington, D.C., 28 July 1999.

11. Ghabra, "Kuwait and the United States," 305-6.

12. Since 1993 even Russia has made major sales to Kuwait, including 27 multiple rocket launchers (BM-30). See Vitaly Gelfgat, "Russian Arms Sales to the Middle East," *Policywatch* 406 (26 August 1999): 1-2.

13. UN Security Council Resolution 688 first created the no-fly zones in both the north (above the 36th parallel in April 1991) and in the south (originally to the 32d parallel in August 1992 and expanded to the 33d parallel in August 1996). Resolution 949 created a no-drive zone in the south after Iraq massed troops near the Kuwaiti border in September-October 1994.

14. Farrow interview.

15. Sarao interview.

16. Terry Jones, "Defense Cooperation in the Persian Gulf" (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 15 July 1996), 36-37.

17. Hughes Aircraft was awarded the \$87 million contract to build the integrated radar system during 1998-99. Ericsson of Sweden won a secure-communications contract worth \$67 million that will link the GCC states. The combined command and control center remains in the planning stages at present. See John Duke Anthony, "Consultation and Consensus in Kuwait: The 18th GCC Head of State Summit," US-GCC Corporate Cooperation Committee, n.d., 53, 57.

18. Patrick Ryan, "Regional Gulf Security," *Gulfwire*, 4 October 1999 (an online E-mail subscription weekly news service provided by the National Council on US-Arab Relations, Washington, D.C.).

19. Although some people expected the signing of a deal at the Dubai Air Show during November 1999, the principals have not agreed upon the expected \$7 billion arrangement (as of this writing), since the UAE continues to negotiate over the price. See Douglas Barrie and Colin Clark, "U.S. Will Oppose Black Shahine on Emirates' F-16s," *Defense News*, 29 November 1999, 4, 36.

20. Patrick Ryan, "UAE Fighter Deal Not Done Yet," *Gulfwire*, 15 November 1999.

21. Gelfgat, 2.

22. Garamone.

23. Jones, 38.

24. CENTCOM official, interviewed by Maj Brent J. Talbot (nonattribution), 1 September 1999.

25. Anthony Cordesman, "The Military Balance in the Middle East—The Southern Gulf by Country: Part XII," *CSIS*, 30 December 1998, 24, 34.

26. As reported by Patrick Ryan, "Bahrain Air Defense Buy," *Gulfwire*, 15 November 1999. See also Anthony Cordesman, "The Military Balance in the Middle East—The Southern Gulf by Country: Part IX," *CSIS*, 30 December 1998, 13.

27. Jones, 37-38.

28. Salim Sultan Al-Ruzaiqi, first secretary, Embassy of Oman, interviewed by Maj Brent J. Talbot, Washington, D.C., 5 May 1999.

29. Jones, 39-40.

30. Al-Ruzaiqi interview.

31. Technological turbulence refers to the efforts by many Gulf states to purchase new military hardware, oftentimes before the last upgrade is fully integrated into the forces. States seek technology for prestige or in an effort to buy allies rather than to improve capability. Anthony Cordesman, comments to the Georgetown University Conference "Buck Rogers or Rock Throwers? Technology Diffusion, International Military Modernization, and the International Response to the Revolution in Military Affairs," 14 October 1999.

32. During the November 1999 Dubai Air Show, GCC officials met and negotiated a joint defense agreement in an effort to create a more credible combined military force. See "Gulf Militaries Make a Big Move," *Global Intelligence Update*, 17 November 1999, 1-2; on-line, Internet, 17 November 1999, available from <http://www.stratfor.com/>.

33. DOD news briefing, Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen, El-Omayid, Egypt, subject: Bright Star Military Training Exercise, 22 October 1999; on-line, Internet, 21 November 1999, available from http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Oct1999/t10251999_t1022sd.html.

34. "Gulf Militaries Make a Big Move" (see note 32) reported that the GCC states are "striving for an unprecedented level of integration between their militaries" and are "on the threshold of creating a more credible military force." This may be so if one simply looks at the military balance on paper, but the many analysts interviewed by the authors, including US officials from Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD)/J-5, OSD/Middle East and North Africa Division, CENTCOM, and a number of GCC nationals in Washington embassies as well as Washington think-tank experts, all expressed grave doubts over such predictions and spelled out the many problems that impede integration efforts. Only the Omanis and some Saudis have hope for a bright future of cooperative defense among GCC states. But even these hopes were expressed beyond the near term. All interviews took place during May-September 1999.

35. Dr. John Duke Anthony, chief executive officer, National Council on US-Arab Relations, Washington, D.C., interviewed by Maj Brent J. Talbot, 5 May 1999.

36. Patrick Ryan, "U.S. Defense Chief Visit," *Gulfwire*, 18 October 1999.

37. Michael N. Barnett, "Regional Security after the Gulf War," *Political Science Quarterly*, Winter 1996-1997, 602.

38. Abdul Khaleq Abdulla, "The Gulf Cooperation Council: Nature, Origin and Process," in Michael C. Hudson, ed., *Middle East Dilemma: The Politics and Economics of Arab Integration* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 154-55.

39. Jones learned during an interview with officials in Muscat in December 1995 that the Omanis felt that Saudi rejection of the one-hundred-thousand-man force was due to their belief that this

idea was Sultan Qaboos's ploy to solve the Omani unemployment problem, since the Omanis would make up most of the force. Jones, 58, 63.

40. High-ranking Omani official, interviewed by Maj Brent J. Talbot (nonattribution), May 1999.

41. "Are Saudi Arabia and Bahrain Trying to Depose the Emir of Qatar?" *Mideast Mirror*, 26 January 1996, 12.

42. Jones, 59.

43. State Department official, interviewed by 2d Lt Matthew Van Hook (nonattribution), April 1999.

44. Roy Oliver, "The Crisis of Religious Legitimacy in Iran," *Middle East Journal*, Spring 1999, 211.

45. Several of the Gulf states' embassy officials as well as US policy makers expressed this view. See also Ghabra, "Kuwait and the United States," 306.

46. Abdulla, 151.

47. Paul Noble, "The Prospects for Arab Cooperation in a Changing Regional and Global System," in Hudson, 83-84.

48. Charles William Maynes, "The Middle East in the Twenty-First Century," *Middle East Journal*, Winter 1998; on-line, Internet, 1 October 1999, available from <http://209.196.144.55/articles/maynes.html>.

49. Ambassador David L. Mack, "U.S. Foreign Policy toward the Middle East," *Middle East Institute Policy Brief*, 14 July 1999; on-line, Internet, 1 October 1999, available from <http://209.196.144.55/briefs/mack-bahrain.html>.

50. As of this writing, the Security Council has voted to replace the United Nations Special Commission with the United Nations Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission but is still debating who will lead the new organization to oversee Iraqi inspections. It also remains to be seen whether Saddam will allow a return of obtrusive inspections by the new organization. See Barbara Crossette, "Annan Facing Growing Split over Arms Control Inspector for Iraq," *New York Times*, 19 January 2000, A10.

51. Michael Eisenstadt and Patrick Clawson, "Crisis with Iraq: What Now? What Next?" *Policywatch* 355 (25 November 1998): 1.

52. Paul K. White, *Crisis after the Storm: An Appraisal of U.S. Air Operations in Iraq since the Persian Gulf War*, Washington Institute for Near East Policy Military Research Papers no. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1999), 63-64.

53. *Ibid.*, 64-65.

54. Gen Anthony Zinni, CINCCENTCOM, speech to the Eighth Annual Middle East Policymakers Conference, Virginia Military Institute, 12 September 1999.

55. Mike MacMurray, OSD/Middle East and North Africa Division, Pentagon, interviewed by Maj Brent J. Talbot, 4 May 1999. Many other US government officials, as well as think-tank experts, have also expressed this view.

56. Timmerman believes that the May 1998 decision to waive the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act sent a weak signal to Iran. See Kenneth R. Timmerman, "Fighting Proliferation through Democracy: A Competitive Strategies Approach Toward Iran" (paper presented at the Seminar on Competitive Strategies and Nonproliferation, US Army War College, 22-25 June 1999, 68; on-line, Internet, 21 May 1999, available from <http://www.wizard.net/~npec/frame.htm>).

57. For several articles criticizing US sanctions and policy toward Iran, see *Foreign Affairs* 76 (May/June 1997).

58. Martin Indyk, assistant secretary for Near East Asian Affairs, "Iran and the United States: Prospects for a New Relationship," transcript of speech to the Asia Society, Washington, D.C., 14 October 1999, 1-2.

59. *Ibid.*, 2.

60. *Ibid.*, 3.

61. Gelfgat, 1.

62. Patrick Clawson, "Dual Containment as an Effective Competitive Strategy" (paper prepared for the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, September 1998), 7.

63. Michael Eisenstadt, "Iran's Revolutionary Guard Commander Sends a Warning," *Policywatch* 314 (7 May 1998): 2.

64. *Ibid.*

65. Due to the lack of control of fissile materials from the former Soviet Union and the shortcomings of intelligence about Iranian capabilities, the potential exists that Iran has the bomb. Still, the Iranian weapons program remains "deeply troubled," according to the latest reports. See James Risen and Judith Miller, "CIA Tells Clinton an Iranian A-Bomb Can't Be Ruled Out," *New York Times*, 17 January 2000, A1, A8.

66. Clawson, "Dual Containment," 8.

67. *Ibid.*, 7.

68. *Ibid.*

69. Barnett, 607.

70. For an analysis of the rational-actor assumption, see John Spanier and Eric Uslaner's "Foreign Policy in a Democracy," in *Understanding International Relations*, ed. Daniel J. Kaufman, Joseph J. Collins, and Thomas F. Schneider, 2d ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Inc., 1995), 1255.

71. Noble, 84.

72. This is an often-expressed view in discussions with Arabs, and they frequently refer to Israel as the 51st state. By granting them equal and fair consideration, US policy makers could help alleviate some of the frustrations expressed toward the United States. For example, we often criticize Iraq for failing to conform to UN resolutions but do not hold Israel to the same standards when it comes to returning occupied lands, as called for in UN resolutions.

73. See *Regional Threats*, American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee web site; on-line, Internet, available from <http://www.aipac.org/result.cfm?id=15>.

74. In fact, Scowcroft argues that UN troops on the Golan would not be acceptable to Israel and that buffer troops may be the only way the two states will agree to a peace settlement. If so, US forces are likely to be the only ones acceptable to both sides. Brent Scowcroft, "A U.S. Role on the Golan Heights?" *New York Times*, 6 January 2000, A23. Moreover, as regards strategic Mount Hermon, US analysts present in the intelligence facility on top of the mountain could pass surveillance information to both sides, thus guaranteeing transparency. David E. Sanger, "In No Hurry, Israel-Syria Talks Edge toward Specifics," *New York Times*, 6 January 2000, A3.

75. Ehud Barak, quoted by Deborah Sontag, "Barak Says Talks with Syria Have Reached Critical Juncture," *New York Times*, 12 January 2000, A3.

76. Robert J. Art, "Geopolitics Updated: The Strategy of Selective Engagement," *International Security* 23 (Winter 1998/1999): 80.

77. *Ibid.*, 81.

78. For a discussion of cooperative order and strategic restraint, see G. John Ikenberry, "Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Persistence of American Postwar Order," *International Security* 23 (Winter 1998/1999): 45.

79. Art, 82.

80. Col Gerald Thompson, Pentagon J-5, chief, Mid East/Africa Division, interviewed by Maj Brent J. Talbot, 4 May 1999.

81. The Carter Doctrine was articulated by President Jimmy Carter in his 1980 State of the Union address, in which he stated that "any attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States . . . and . . . will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force." See Gary Sick, "The United States and the Persian Gulf: From Twin Pillars to Dual Containment," in Lesch, 280.

82. Dr. Anthony Cordesman, "Conflict and Stability: The Gulf," presentation to the Eighth Annual Mideast Policymakers Conference, Virginia Military Institute, 13 September 1999. The authors agree wholeheartedly with his assessment.

83. Richard N. Haas, "Paradigm Lost," *Foreign Affairs* 74 (January/February 1995): 45.